

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BG

SUBJECT: BAKSAL COMMITTEES, OFFICERS, CONSTITUTION ANNOUNCED

REF: DACCA 2753

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT MUJIBUR RAHMAN TODAY (JUNE 7) ANNOUNCED IN A GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY THE CONSTITUTION OF BAKSAL, THE COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY'S EXECUTIVE ANDH CENTRAL COMMITTEES, THE MEMBERSHIP OF ITS FIVE SPECIAL INTEREST FRONTS, AND THE PARTY'S CHIEF OFFICERS. THE COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IS UNSURPRISING BUT THE LARGER CENTRAL COMMITTEE DEMONSTRATES THE EXTENT OF SHEIKH MUJIB'S DESIRE TO INTEGRATE THE CIVIL AND MILITARY SERVICES INTO THE RULING PARTY. ABSORPTION OF MEMBERS OF FORMER OPPOSITION PARTIES INTO BAKSAL IS MINIMAL. END SUMMARY.

2. THE STREETS OF DACCA ARE FILLED WITH MARCHERS AND TRUCKLOADS OF YOUTHS, MOVING TOWARDS THE HEADQUARTERS OF BAKSAL. ALL ARE ON THEIR WAY TO FELICITATE SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN WHO TODAY HAS COMPLETED THE PROCESS OF RESTRUCTURING THE POLITICAL LIFE OF BANGLADESH. THE DAY COMMEMORATES THE NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEGINNING OF THE SIX-POINT MOVEMENT BUT MAY ENTER BAKSAL MUTHOLOGY AS THE DAY SHEIKH MUJIB MADE THE "SECOND REVOLUTION" A GOING CONCERN.

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3. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMPOSITION OF BAKSAL'S EXECUTIVE AND

CENTRAL COMMITTEES AS WELL AS THE APPOINTMENT OF ITS OFFICERS HAVE BEEN MATTERS OF GROWING INTEREST IN RECENT WEEKS. AS IT TURNS OUT, THEY SUGGEST LESS CHANGE THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, NUMBERING FIFTEEN, INCLUDES: SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN

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CHAIRMAN; SYED NAZRUL ISLAM, M. MANSOOR ALI--SECRETARY-GENERAL, KHONDOKAR MUSHTAQUE AHMED, A.H.M. KAMARUZZAMAN, ABDUL MALEK UKIL, PROF.

YOUSUF ALI, MANORANJAN DHAR, DR. MUZZAFFAR AHMED CHOWDHURY, SHEIKH ABDUL AZIZ, MOHIUDDIN AHMED, GAZI GOLAM MUSTAFA, ZILLUR RAHMAN--SECRETARY, SHEIKH FAZLUL HUQ MONI--SECRETARY, AND ABDUL RAZZAK--SECRETARY. THERE ARE NO SURPRISES IN THIS GROUP.

4. THE 115-MEMBER CENTRAL COMMITTEE (WHICH INCLUDES ALL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS) IS NOTEWORTHY NOT FOR THE POLITICIANS APPOINTED BUT RATHER FOR ITS INCLUSION OF A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS (MOST OF WHOM HEAD KEY MINISTRIES) AND THE CHIEFS OF THE ARMED SERVICES, THE RAKKHI BAHINI, AND THE BANGLADESH RIFLES AND THE HEAD OF THE POLICE. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE FIVE EDUCATORS, THREE NEWSPAPER EDITORS, AND TWO PHYSICIANS. INSOFAR AS ERSTWHILE OPPOSITION FIGURES ARE CONCERNED, THEY NUMBER ONLY 10; THEY INCLUDE PROFESSOR MAZAFFAR AHMED OF NAP/M, MOHAMMAD FARHAD OF CPB, ATAUR RAHMAN KHAN, AND OLD-TIME PEASANT LEADER AND ASSOCIATE OF MAULANA BHASHANI, HAJI MOHAMMED DANESH. CPB LEADER MONI SINGH DIDHNOT MAKE THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE; HE IS ONLY A MEMBER OF THE PEASANT FRONT.

5. PRIME MINISTER MANSOOR ALI HAS BEEN CHOSEN AS BAKSAL'S SECRETARY-GENERAL. IN ADDITION, THREE SECRETARIES HAVE BEEN MAMED: SHEIKH FAZLUL HUQ MONI, ERSTWHILE LABOR LEADER; ZILLUR RAHMAN, THE AWAMI LEAGUE'S GENERAL SECRETARY; AND ABDUR RAZZAK, AWAMI LEAGUE ORGANIZING SECRETARY. THE DUTIES OF THE THREE SECRETARIES HAVE YET TO BE SPELLED OUT, BUT WE WOULD ANTICIPATE THAT RAHMAN AND RAZZAK WILL CONTINUE TO DO MUCH THE SAME WORK AS THEY DID FOR THE AWAMI LEAGUE. MONI IS, OF COURSE, THE UNKNOWN QUANTITY, BUT IT IS CLEAR HE SEES HIS APPOINTMENT AS A FURTHER AID TO HIS UNDISGUISED AMBITION TO SUCCEED HIS UNCLE.

6. THE BAKSAL FRONTS NUMBER FIVE. THEY ARE THE JATIYO KRISHAK (PEASANT)

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LEAGUE, HEADED BY RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATIVES MINISTER PHANI MAJUMDAR; THE JATIYO SRAMIK (LABOR) LEAGUE, HEADED BY LABORHMINISTER YUSUF ALI; THE JATIYO MAHILA (WOMEN) LEAGUE, HEADED BY MRS. SAJEDA CHOWDHURY, MP; THE JATIYO JUBO (YOUTH) LEAGUE, HEADED BY TOFAEL AHMED;

AND THE JATIYO CHHATRA (STUDENTS) LEAGUE, HEADED BY SHEIKH SHAHIDUL ISLAM. MOST ATTENTION IS FOCUSSED ON SHEIKH MONI'S DISAPPEARANCE FROM THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SRAMIK LEAGUE; NOT ONLY IS HE THOUGHT TO

HAVE DECIDED THAT MORE IS TO BE GAINED FROM BAKSAL OFFICE BUT SOME
CONTEND THAT HE RECOGNIZES THAT LEADERSHIP OF LABOR MAY BECOME A
LIABILITY IF ECONOMIC GRIEVANCES CONTINUE TO GO UNMET. TOFAEL
AHMED'S REAPPEARANCE AS A YOUTH LEADER MIGHT BE DEEMED A STEP DOWN
(PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF MONI'S SHIFT) EXCEPT FOR THE FACT THAT
HE HAS RETAINED HIS POSITION AS SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT,
AND THUS EASY ACCESS TO SHEIKH MUJIB. SHEIKH SHAHIDUL ISLAM IS
PERHAPS MOST NOTEWORTHY FOR BEING YET ANOTHER NEPHEW OF SHEIKH MUJIB.

7. THE DETAILS OF THE 24-ARTICLE CONSTITUTION HAVE NOT YET BEEN
FULLY PUBLISHED. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DAY-TO-DAY BUSINESS OF BAKSAL; THE CENTRAL
COMMITTEE WILL MEET TO CONDUCT PARTY BUSINESS IN THE INTERIM BETWEEN
MEETINGS OF THE BAKSAL COUNCIL. THE COUNCIL, TO BE COMPRISED OF
MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND CENTRAL COMMITTEES AND DISTRICT
COMMITTEES OF BAKSAL, SHALL BE THE PARTY'S PLENARY BODY AND IS
REQUIRED TO MEET ONLY TWICE IN FIVE YEARS. THE PARTY'S CONTROL
WILL BE CENTRALIZED. FOR EXAMPLE, THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WILL
"APPROVE" THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE DISTRICT COMMITTEES, THUS REDUCING
THE POSSIBILITY OF DISSENT FROM BELOW. MOREOVER, AS ONE PRESS ACCOUNT
PUTS IT, "THE HIGHER COMMITTEE SHALL ATTACH IMPORTANCE TO THE OPINION
AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE LOWER COMMITTEES AND ORDINARY MEMBERS";
DEMOCRATIC CONTROL THUS SEEM QUITE LIMITED. MEMBERSHIP IN BAKSAL
IS OPEN TO ANY CITIZEN IN GOOD STANDING OVER THE AGE OF 18, EXCEPT
FOR THE JUDICIARY, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT THE PARTY'S APPROVAL
MECHANISM WILL BE.

8. COMMENT: BAKSAL IS GOING TO CONSIDERABLE LENGTHS TODAY TO DRAMA-
TIZE THE PROMULGATION OF ITS CONSTITUTION AND THE VARIOUS APPOINTMENTS,

AND THE USUAL SPONTANEOUS DEMONSTRATIONS OF SUPPORT AND AFFECTION
ARE IN PROCESS AT THIS MOMENT. HOWEVER, THE CHANGES WHICH HAVE BEEN
ANNOUNCED TODAY SUGGEST MORE TONE OF FORM THAN OF SUBSTANCE. WE
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WILL, HOWEVER, BE STUDYING THE CHANGES AND APPOINTMENTS WITH CARE OVER
COMING DAYS, PARTICULARLY IN AN EFFORT TO DETERMINE THE DEGREE TO WHICH
SHEIKH MUJIB HAS BROADENED AND/OR ALTERED HIS PARTY'S IDEOLOGICAL BASE.

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